

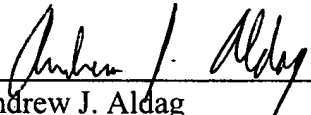
**REMARKS**

In the specification, the paragraphs noted above have been amended to insert a priority claim to parent application 09/646,678, correct minor editorial problems, and to insert element numbers where appropriate. It is respectfully submitted that the amendments made to the specification do not constitute new matter.

Claims 1-18 are pending in the present application. The application is considered to be in condition for examination and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this Preliminary Amendment or the newly executed declaration, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Andrew J. Aldag  
Registration No. 40,483

EDELL, SHAPIRO & FINNAN, LLC  
1901 Research Boulevard, Suite 400  
Rockville, Maryland 20850-3164  
(301) 424-3640

Hand Delivered: April 16, 2004